



# FIRST UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH ALBANY

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January 18, 2023

Dear Members of First United Methodist Church of Albany,

It is our honor to serve you as we approach an important decision in the life of our church. Since last July, we have been discerning our relationship with the United Methodist Church denomination. Last November, our Church Council voted to authorize a Church Conference in which all full, professing members will vote on this matter. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of important dates and information to help you discern and prepare for the conference, as well as to thank you for your Christian witness and participation throughout this journey.

**Key Dates:**

1/23: We will provide multiple venues for you to ask questions of the Discernment Team. We will open a confidential email address and station drop boxes around the church to receive questions. We will provide answers to frequently asked questions.

2/1: On or around this date, we will provide a Report of the Discernment Team to provide detailed information about the discernment process to assist you in the decision-making process. We will distribute this via email, our church website, and printed copies (stationed around the church facility). Updates will also be provided moving forward.

2/5: Sunday Morning Informational Meeting. You are invited to join members of the discernment team in the Sapp Conference Room to share questions and comments. This meeting will be held during the Sunday School hour--9:30-10:20 AM.

2/16: Church Council meeting with Rev. Doreen Smalls, SW GA District Superintendent, in Ford Hall at 6 PM. Rev. Smalls will discuss the disaffiliation process and answer questions. Church members who are not Church Council members are welcome to attend to observe. At this time, we hope to schedule with Rev. Smalls the date for the Church Conference (congregation meeting), where we will vote to either remain affiliated with the UMC or to disaffiliate. We have written assurances from Rev. Smalls that the vote will be scheduled before the April 1st deadline.

2/17: An email and letter will be sent to members giving information concerning the meeting for the congregational vote, including the date, time, location, and process.

Again, we thank you for demonstrating Christ-likeness during our discernment process. Please pray for us, for our congregation, and for all United Methodist Churches. If you have any thoughts or questions, please feel free to contact us.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Kathy Wooten  
Chair, Discernment Team

Allen Twiggs  
Chair, Church Council